Two Motives that Prevent us from Sinning

Selected Scriptures
2/14/10

Introduction:

What are motives? A motive is a reason for doing things. Motives are what drive us. Motives move us into action.

What reason does the believer have to live a holy life? What would drive us to live according to God's standards?

** Two Motives that Prevent us from Sinning*

I. The FEAR of God (Prov.8:13; 16:6)

Proverbs 8:13
The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Proverbs 16:6
By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.

II. The LOVE of God (John 14:23-24; I John 5:3)

John 14:23-24
"…If a man love me, he will keep my words…He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings"

I John 5:3 - *"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."*

How do we obtain this Fear of God and Love for God? By Faith.

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Certainly, we are not motivated to live a clean life by the flesh.
The flesh would demand that we receive maximum pleasure, all of the time, at the expense of truth, morals, and other people.

Certainly, we are not motivated to live a clean life by the world.
As we observe the world around us, the current flows opposite the Bible.
Everyone's doing it therefore why shouldn't I?

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I. The FEAR of God (Prov.8:13; 16:6)

Proverbs 16:6
"… by the fear of the Lord *men* depart from evil."

Christians should not fear:

1. Man (Prov. 29:25)
   Fear hinders believers from speaking about Christ (Jn. 7:13).
   Fear has been the cause for "secret" believers (Jn. 19:38).

2. Physical circumstances (Mt. 8:26)

3. Death (Heb. 2:14-15)

Christians should fear God -

The fear of the Lord is "clean" (Ps. 119:9)

1. A fear of respect
   Ps. 112:1; Mal. 1:6; Luke 12:4-5; I Pet. 2:7; Rev. 14:7

2. A fear of displeasing Him
   II Cor. 7:1; Eph. 6:5; Phil. 2:12; I Pet. 1:17

One of the biggest problems (even among some Christians today) is a lack of a fear of God.
Verses from Proverbs on *"the fear of the Lord"*: Prov. 1:7, 3:7, 8:13, 9:10, 14:16, 15:16, 16:6, 23:17.

"Fear God" (1 Peter 2:17) **-** we must continually live in reverence for God (*"holy and reverend is His name"* - Ps. 111:9).

Stand in awe of God! (Ps. 33:8 - *"Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.")*

The highest authority (God) deserves the highest respect.

Heb. 12:28-29

Rev. 14:7
Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Having a "fear of God" is to fear disobeying Him and to fear displeasing Him.

All of Life's responsibilities can be reduced to a simple axiom:
"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God**, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man." Eccles. 12:13

> ***Matthew 10:28***
> ***And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.***

"Them" - unbelievers (perhaps instigated by Satan)

"People can kill the body" - (not outside of God's sovereign control, however - Deut. 32:39; Mt. 10:29-31) ***"but after that*** **[they]** ***have no more that they can do"*** (Lk. 12:4)

Any harm man does is only temporary.

Satan can't touch the soul.

He himself will be helplessly cast into hell, he sends no one there.

"Rather fear him" - Fear God (not Satan). It is God (specifically, Jesus Christ who holds the *"keys of hell and of death"* (Rev. 1:18)

The word ***"fear"*** means not only to have a reverence (respect) for God (because of who He is) but also to tremble before Him; to be terrified by him (because of what He can do) (II Cor. 5:11)

God is to be feared.

Deut. 6:13 - *"Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by his name."*

I Sam. 12:24 - *"Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things He hath done for you."*

Ps. 33:8 - *"Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."*

Eccles. 12:13 - *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."*

I Pet. 2:17 - *"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."*

Rev. 14:7 - *"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."*

Rev. 15:4 - *"Who shall not fear thee, O lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."*

Fearing God takes faith today! (one day it will not! - Rev. 6:16-17)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10)

The most spiritual people in history had this testimony, that they feared God.

--Joseph feared God (Gen. 42:18)
--The 70 elders of Israel were chosen because they feared God (Ex. 18:21)
--Job feared God (Job 1:9)
--The virtuous woman feared God (Prov. 31:30)

The person who fears God will:

--walk in God's ways (Ps. 128:1 - *"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways"*; cp. Prov. 14:2 - *"He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him."*)

When you Fear the LORD…You <u>HATE SIN</u> (Prov.8:13; 16:6)

Proverbs 8:13
The fear of the Lord *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

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II. The LOVE of God (John 14:23-24; I John 5:3)

John 14:23-24

"…If a man love me, he will keep my words…He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings"

v. 23
"Keep My words" - (*logon*) Not merely Christ's imperatives, but His words in general (the principles, precepts, and spiritual tasks He gave us).

"Abode" = dwelling or abiding place ((full residency). This term is related to the word "mansions" in John 14:2.

This abode is similar to what it means to be "filled with the Spirit." The one who submits (yields) to God's Word experiences the special presence of God.

This "abode" is an abode of fellowship

Disobedience to Christ signifies NO LOVE for Christ (v.24a)

v. 24
"He that loveth me not" – present active articular participle – "the one who keeps on not loving Me" (Robertson, p. 254). (an unbeliever is in view)

v. 24
So that no one misses the point (of vv. 21-23), Jesus states it in the negative. Disobedience is motivated by absence of love for Christ.

Every time we disobey, we are demonstrating (at that moment) a lack of love for Christ.

The unsaved heathen demonstrate lack of love for Christ on a continual, ongoing basis.

Just as a child's disobedience demonstrates a lack of love for his parental authority, so a child of God's disobedience demonstrates a lack of love for his divine authority.

I Jn. 5:3 - ***"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."***

A. Your love for God gives you the incentive to obey Him <u>CONSCIENTIOUSLY</u>

v. 3

"<u>This</u> is the love of God" - Love for God is very specifically defined – it is <u>not</u> ecstatic feelings for God; <u>not</u> mental acknowledgement of God; <u>not</u> a religious experience from God; but it is <u>practical</u>, thought out, conscientious obedience to God.

Love is action; love is effort; love sweats for God; love gives time and effort for God; love yields one's own wants, desires, and pleasures, in order to fulfill the wants, desires, pleasure and will of the one it loves.

Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

"Keep" - *tereo*. Two ideas:

1) to keep in the sense of <u>guard</u>; to watch over something so as to protect it (cp. protection in Rev. 3:10; Jn. 17:15)

2) To keep in the sense of to <u>observe</u>, to obey (Mt. 28:20).

Both ideas imply a conscientiousness toward God's commands.

"His commandments" - "The Christian life is a life of principled, conscientious obedience to God's will as <u>revealed in the Bible</u>." (A.N. Martin).

Obedience is not real obedience if we do not obey God . . .
*exactly
*completely
*without delay
*without excuse

- Husbands, you love God when you obey His command to love your wives and lead your family.

- Wives, you love God when you obey His command to submit to your husbands and serve your family's needs.

- Children, you love God when you obey His command to obey and honor your parents.

- Singles, you love God when you obey His command to "flee fornication" and "be content."

- Employees, you love God when you obey His command to work, not as men pleasers but as diligent servants of Christ.

- Christian, you love God when you obey His command to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples of all nations.

- Christian, you love God when you obey His command to not forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25).

We often say that hate is the opposite of love. In actuality, <u>sin</u> is the antithesis to <u>love</u>. Hence, Jesus said regarding the last days: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt. 24:12).

Whenever we sin, we sin because at that moment, our love for God isn't what it should be. The degree to which you love God will determine the degree to which you keep from deliberately sinning against Him.

"Ye that love the Lord, hate evil."

Don't say you love God when you are downing a six-pack of Budweiser or reading pornography or pursuing a divorce of your spouse or committing fornication or adultery or snorting cocaine.

B. Your love for God gives you the drive to obey Him <u>CONTINUALLY</u>

"Keep" - the present tense of the verb implies a continual, habitual or repetitive activity – not a one-time deal, not a mere month-long, explosive, excited, storm of obedience to God, followed by a long, dry, desert-like duration of disobedience.

One who loves God is not a "fire cracker Christian" who burns hot then explodes, but whose flame dies out into cold uselessness.

Love for God is the plodder, who day by day, week by week, year by year, decade by decade, is still serving God faithfully, still in the Word, still in the class teaching, still to be found doing humble acts of service.

C. Your love for God gives you the attitude to obey Him <u>CHEERFULLY</u>

"His commandments are not grievous" - when love for God is your motive for obedience, the obedience is not a heavy burden; it is not painful drudgery; it is not an oppressive weight.

When you love Him you are close to Him, and when you are close to Him, you find yourself yoked to Him, and since you are yoked to Him, He shares the heavy end of the load and you find that "his yoke is easy" and His "burden is light."

Nothing God expects from us is too heavy for us to bear.

He would not ask you to do something which He didn't equip you to do.

This does <u>not</u> mean that obedience to God is so easy that it will never require sweat, patience, and great effort. Indeed it will! But obedience will never be so heavy that it is impossible.

I Cor. 10:13 - There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to <u>bear *it*</u>.)

Love never gives up, but "beareth all things. . . endureth all things" (I Cor. 13:7).

Love is the power for obedience – Have you turned on the power switch?

Doing our Christian responsibility does not elicit the response:
"Oh, do I have to?!"
"I'm too tired!"
"I'll do it, but I don't like it!"

It is no drudgery to give of your money to the Lord, when you love Him, “for God loveth a cheerful giver” (II Cor. 9:7).

So you say, “I love God.”

Is there visible, tangible, concrete evidence to substantiate that statement?

View all temptation as a test of your love for God. Go to the Lord in prayer and say: “God I really want to give in to this temptation, but you are worthy of my obedience. I love you. And I offer my obedience to you as a sweet sacrifice to you.

Conclusion:

Example of Joseph and Potephar's wife: Gen. 39:1-12

V. 6
"Goodly ... well-favored" = handsome

Joseph is now 27 years old, at the peak of his masculinity. The temptation would have been real.

This test was:

A. Seductive (v. 7)
B. Continual (v. 10)
C. Convenient (v. 11)

Everything we do, we do before the eyes of God.

Prov. 15:3 - "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

There may have been no man in the house, but God was there!

It's amazing to see what people will do in the presence of God only - that they would never do in the presence of men.

The reality of God to you can be measured by that which you would be willing to do with only God watching. If He is real to you, there are some things you could never do.

Factors in Joseph's victory over sin:

Joseph was:

1. Courageous to say no (Gen. 39:8)

2. Loyal to God - Gen. 39:8-9

   . . . And God's institution of marriage

   A mark of character is loyalty.

   Loyalty = to adopt God's wishes and will and make it your own.

3. Shocked at sin - Gen. 39:9

   "This great wickedness"

   He was so morally sensitive to sin.

4. One who avoided the presence of evil (Gen. 39:10)

   Pornography, suggestive TV programs, sensual music, etc., must all be avoided.

5. Quick to flee temptation

   To linger and dally with temptation is always to fall, because in a battle between the imagination and will, the imagination always wins, and the fallen will always gives in.

   II Tim. 2:22 - "Flee youthful lusts"

   I Cor. 10:13 - God always makes a way out

Ultimately, it was Joseph's fear of God and love for God that motivated him to flee temptation!

How do we obtain this Fear of God and Love for God? By Faith.

Faith in what God has revealed about Himself (via creation, conscience, and especially Scripture).

If you find that there is insufficient motivation in your life to do right, you need to ask God to build your faith in Him and to instill this Fear and Love of God in you.